



Top Stories

[Comments](#) 0 | [Recommend](#) 0

New homes coming to Cornelius as construction hits record low

06:18 PM EST on Tuesday, December 16, 2008

By ALEX REED / NewsChannel 36

E-mail Alex: AReed@WCNC.com

Video



December 16th, 2008

New homes coming to Cornelius

- [View larger](#)
- [E-mail clip](#)
- [More video](#)

Search Video:



CORNELIUS, N.C. -- A new Bloomberg business report shows new home construction fell 19 percent in November. That's the largest decline on record.

But with dwindling sales and rising foreclosures there is one section of the housing market that's increasing. It's the custom built \$500,000 homes.

Several of these types of homes are on their way to Cornelius and a company has a unique idea of how to incorporate them into the community and the nature around them. Even though the country is in one

of the largest housing recessions in decades, this company says their timing should be OK.

About 140 homes are being built next to the Robins Nature Preserve in Cornelius.

Farmers and Merchants Bank is helping finance the project. Tim Proper with F&M Bank describes the area as, "A pretty ideal setting."

What's not ideal is the timing.

"Timing is always a difficult thing in our environment," said Ray Killian Jr., with Simonini Builders. "We started on this seven years ago."

The move-in dates for the homes are slated for 2010.

"We feel like the timing of that is going to be pretty good because we believe the housing crisis and the financial crisis, all of that is going to be substantially better," said Killian.

And with the price of lumber and labor decreasing during the economic downturn, Simonini Builders can construct these homes at a lower cost than they could a few years ago.

Cornelius Mayor Jeff Tarte calls this a great opportunity for the city. He says the Robinson Nature Preserve would have gone mostly unused without the paths and parking provided by the new neighborhood.

"There will be 10 to 11 fields added to our parks system for use by the community," Tarte said.

But the real beauty of this project is the partnership between Mecklenburg County Parks and Recreation and the builders to create public parks and a 50-acre nature preserve.

"It's so rare that you would have 140 lots inside a 50-acre public park," said Killian.

What's also rare is beating the national housing trend. Only time will measure the success of this project and we'll check back in a few months.

Grading for the home sites started Tuesday and organizers hope to have some of the public infrastructure open sometime in 2010.